

# *HOMICIDE*

*IN  
CALIFORNIA*

*2005*



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Division of California Justice Information Services  
Bureau of Criminal Information and Analysis  
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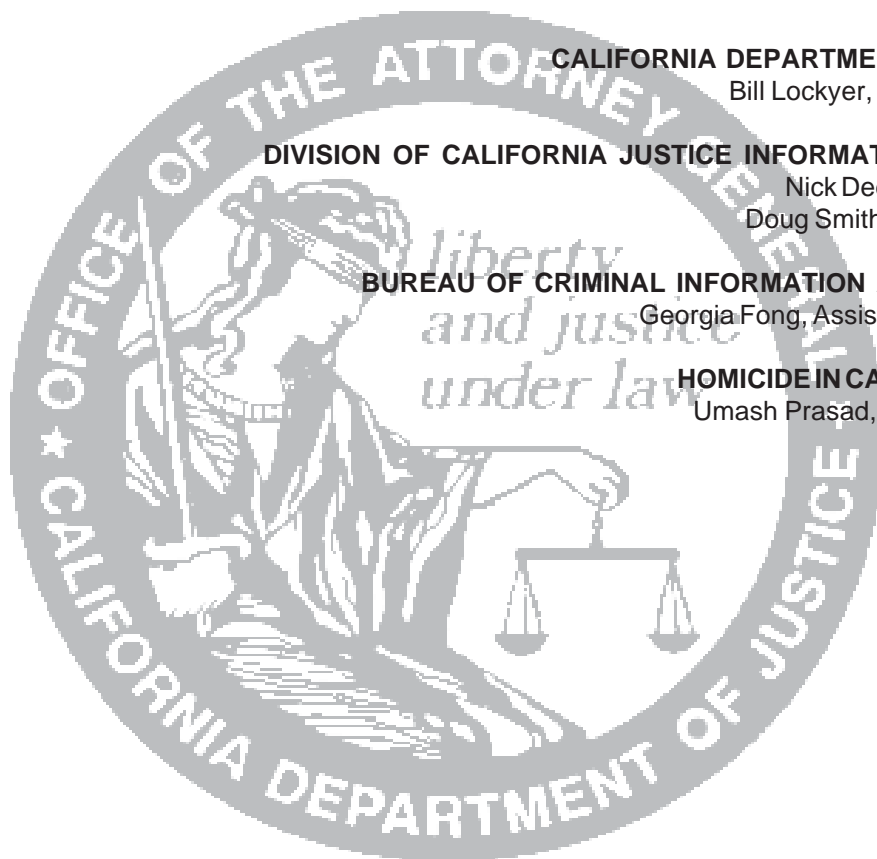
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**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

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**HOMICIDE IN CALIFORNIA, 2005**

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**The role of the Criminal Justice Statistics Center is to:**

- *Collect, analyze, and report statistical data which provide valid measures of crime and the criminal justice process.*
- *Examine these data on an ongoing basis to better describe crime and the criminal justice system.*
- *Promote the responsible presentation and use of crime statistics.*

## CONTENTS

Mission Statement .....	ii
Introduction .....	iv
Highlights .....	v
Overview .....	vi
<b>Data Analysis .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Homicide Crimes .....	2
Homicide Arrests .....	26
Death Penalty Sentences .....	32
Peace Officers Killed in the Line of Duty .....	36
Justifiable Homicides .....	40
<b>Data Tables .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Appendices .....</b>	<b>89</b>
Appendix I – Computational Formulas .....	89
Appendix II – Criminal Justice Glossary .....	90

## INTRODUCTION

*Homicide in California, 2005* contains information about the crime of homicide and its victims, demographic data on persons arrested for homicide, and information about the response of the criminal justice system. Information about the death penalty, the number of peace officers killed in the line of duty, and justifiable homicide is also included.

Information displayed in this publication comes from several databases maintained by the California Department of Justice (DOJ). The primary source of information is the Homicide File, which captures willful and justifiable homicide crime data. Other databases capture information about persons arrested for homicide, death penalty sentences, and peace officers killed in the line of duty. The reader should consider that the type of data collected, and the methods used to collect these data, differ for each data set. *Unless otherwise indicated, all calculations are based on the number of known incidents.*

To provide the most valid data possible, the disposition section of this report has been removed. In 2001, Criminal Justice Statistics Center (CJSC) staff determined that a number of homicide arrests submitted to the DOJ's Automated Criminal History System (from which adult felony arrest disposition data are extracted) from 1997 to 2001 should have been submitted as arrests for attempted homicide. In addition, some correctly submitted attempted homicide arrests were programmatically treated as homicide arrests. As a result, more homicide arrests were counted during these years than occurred. This caused the percentage of

homicide convictions to be too low and the percentage of assault convictions to be too high. (Both percentages were based on the number of adult felony arrests for homicide for which dispositions were received.) Based on CJSC staff findings, the reader is advised against using previously published disposition data from 1997 to 1999. It should be noted that the DOJ has addressed this issue and that the exclusion of disposition data does not affect crime, arrest, death penalty, nor other data included in this or past reports. When homicide disposition data are once again determined to be accurate, they will be included in this publication.

Beginning in 2004, the population estimates used to calculate rates are based on revisions of the 2000 census. For 2003 and earlier, these population estimates were based on revisions of the 1990 census. Readers are advised to exercise care in interpreting changes in percent and rates between decennial census samples, as these census samples are statistically independent and measure two different populations at two different points in time. In addition, the "Other" population category now includes the new race/ethnic group of "Multi-racial." The extent to which this new race/ethnic group affects other population estimates is not known.

CJSC publications available in either printed or electronic format (via the Attorney General's website) are listed on the inside of the back cover. Customized statistical reports or additional statistical information may be requested by contacting the CJSC at the numbers or addresses provided there.

## HIGHLIGHTS

## HOMICIDE CRIMES (see pages 2–23)

- ✓ From 1996 to 2005, the homicide crime rate decreased 24.4 percent (9.0 to 6.8). From 2004 to 2005, homicide crimes increased 4.6 percent in rate per 100,000 population (6.5 to 6.8). (Source: Table 1.)
- ✓ A greater percentage of white victims were female than were Hispanic or black victims. White victims tended to be older, Hispanic and black victims, younger. (Source: Tables 8 and 9.)
- ✓ In 2005, where the victim-offender relationship was known, 38.6 percent of the victims were killed by friends or acquaintances. (Source: Table 12.)
- ✓ Of the 36 counties for which 2005 homicide rates were calculated, Tulare County experienced the highest rate per 100,000 population (12.9); Imperial County experienced the lowest (0.0). (Source: Table 14.)
- ✓ In 2005, the highest average daily number of homicides occurred on weekends. (Source: Table 16.)
- ✓ In 2005, where the contributing circumstance was known, 40.0 percent of homicides were the result of an argument. (Source: Table 24.)

## HOMICIDE ARRESTS (see pages 26–29)

- ✓ From 1996 to 2005, the homicide arrest rate decreased 31.3 percent (9.9 to 6.8). From 2004 to 2005, homicide arrests decreased 2.9 percent in rate per 100,000 population at risk (7.0 to 6.8). (Source: Table 29.)
- ✓ From 1996 to 2005, the overwhelming majority of homicide arrestees and victims were male. (Source: Tables 5 and 30.)

- ✓ From 1996 to 2005, the largest percentage of homicide arrestees and victims were Hispanic. (Source: Tables 6 and 31.)
- ✓ From 1996 to 2005, the largest percentage of homicide arrestees and victims were aged 18–29. (Source: Tables 7 and 32.)

DEATH PENALTY SENTENCES  
(see pages 32–33)

- ✓ By the end of 2005, there were 654 persons under sentence of death in California. Of these, 22 were sentenced in 2005. (Source: Table 35.)

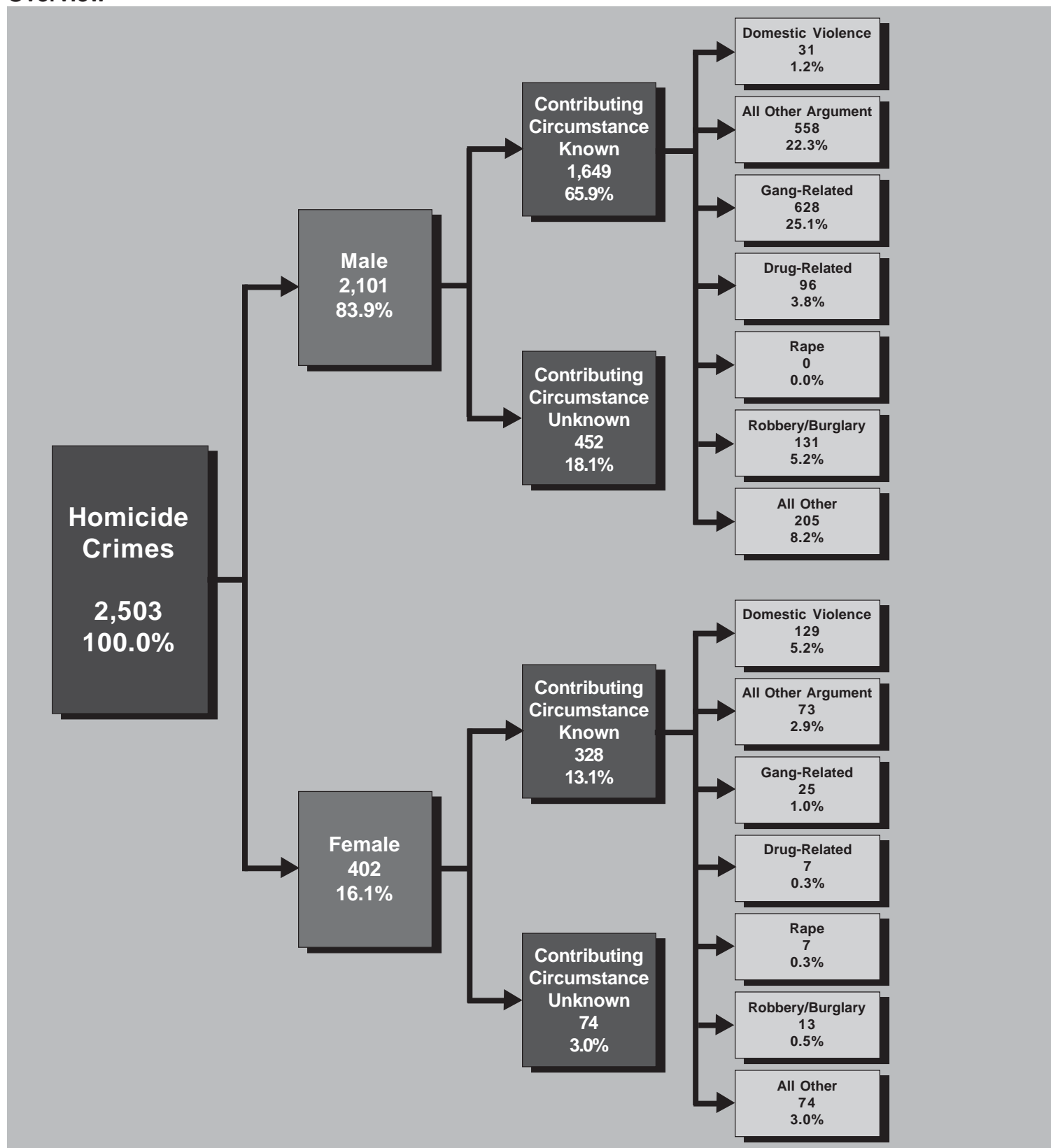
PEACE OFFICERS KILLED IN THE LINE  
OF DUTY (see pages 36–37)

- ✓ Since 1996, there have been 50 peace officers feloniously killed in the line of duty. Five were killed in 2005. (Source: Table 37.)
- ✓ Between 1996 and 2005, the homicide rate for peace officers killed in the line of duty varied from 2.9 to 10.7 per 100,000 sworn law enforcement personnel. (Source: Table 37.)

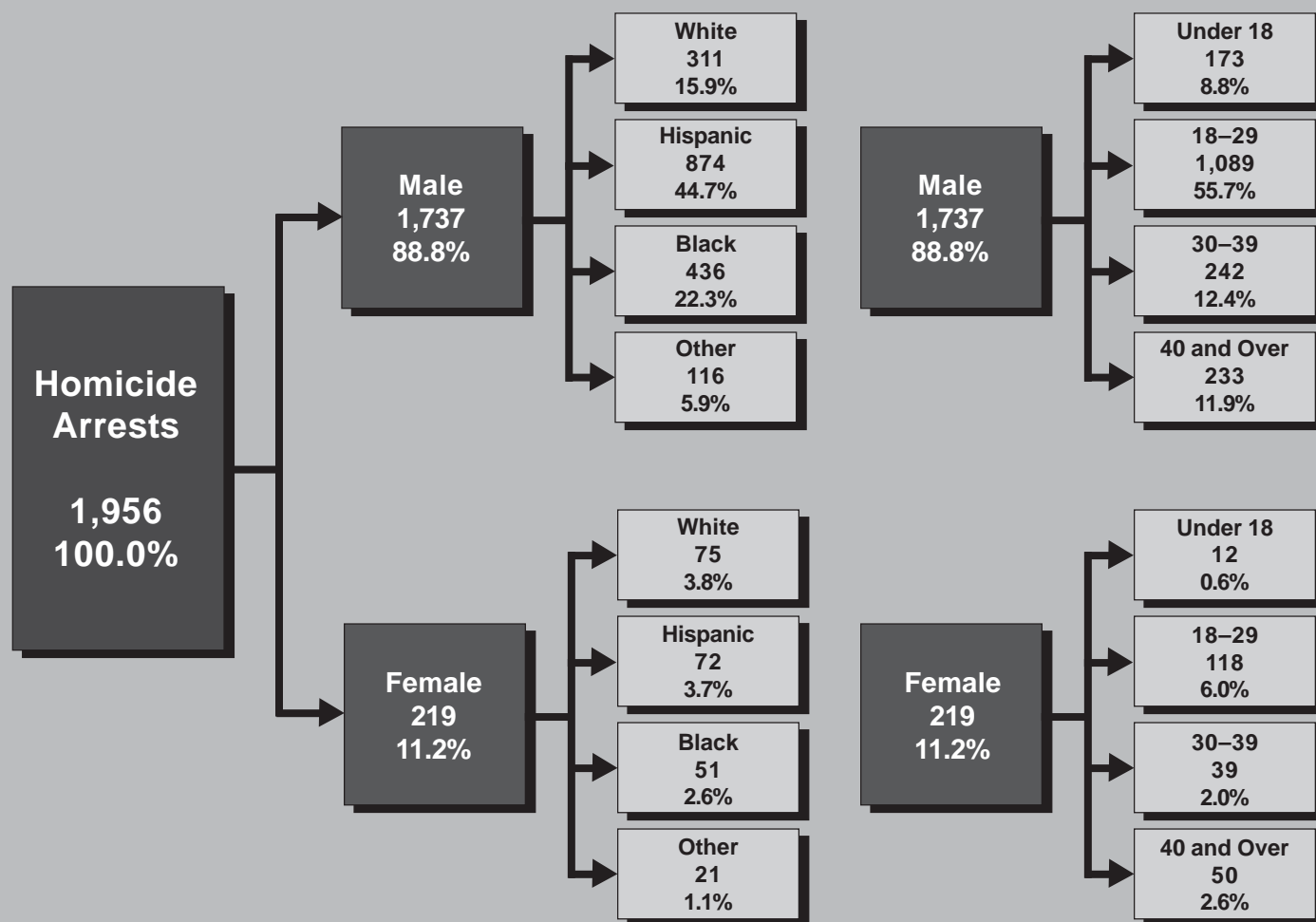
## JUSTIFIABLE HOMICIDES (see pages 40–43)

- ✓ In 2005, justifiable homicides by peace officers were most often the result of a felon attacking a peace officer (80.0 percent). (Source: Table 41.)

Figure 1  
HOMICIDE IN CALIFORNIA, 2005  
Overview







Source: Tables 25 and 34.

Notes: Percentages may not add to subtotals or 100.0 because of rounding.

Contributing circumstance percent calculations in this figure are based on the total number of victims, rather than on the number of known circumstances. Therefore, percentages displayed here will not match percentages displayed elsewhere in this report.

## CRIMES

The homicide category comprises murder and non-negligent manslaughter. Attempted murder, justifiable homicide, manslaughter by negligence, and suicide are excluded.

## CONTRIBUTING CIRCUMSTANCE

Contributing circumstance, when known, is reported by law enforcement agencies on the supplemental homicide report. In 2005, there were 526 homicides in

which the contributing circumstance was unknown. Of this number, 452 involved male victims and 74 involved female victims.

## ARRESTS

All California law enforcement agencies report arrest information to the California Department of Justice on the *Monthly Arrest and Citation Register*. Data submitted includes age, gender, and race/ethnic group; and specifies the most serious arrest offense and law enforcement disposition.